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Title: Regarding taking necessary steps to improve the functioning of Tea Board.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): This is about the present affairs of the Tea Board of India which is facing problems. Some bureaucrats dealing with the Tea Board are showing highhanded behaviour.

Tea Board was constituted by an enactment of Parliament – the Tea Act, 1953. It was running very smoothly. Since 2012, there is no permanent Chairman of the Tea Board. A few bureaucrats started transferring more than 30 employees together to the different regional offices in a very undemocratic manner. There is a suspected move that existence of Tea Board may face a big challenge.

I had a talk with the hon. Minister yesterday, and handed over a memorandum with a request that this decision to transfer be withdrawn and discussion be held with the employees association and with the Tea Board Members. If necessary, the Minister may be involved. As the local MP, I want to be involved with the whole issue.

Madam, I would like to request the hon. Minister that a high level enquiry be instituted to probe the affairs in the Tea Board; a full time Chairman to be appointed shortly; transfer of employees being done in an inhuman manner be revoked immediately; Board's head office should also be strengthened, not only just the regional offices, and that too at the expense of head office; and professional management, who are conversant with the problems of tea industry, should be appointed.

Most of the staffers of the Board are going to superannuate in the next few years. To make the organization vibrant, fresh blood should be infused. Staff restructuring should be done in such a manner that the pangs of such an exercise should not be felt by those employees who have forgone many career advancement opportunities to look after their families and infirm dependants.

I hope the hon. Minister will rise to the occasion in the interest of the Tea Board and take such appropriate steps by which the functioning of the Tea Board continues with inspiration and enthusiasm. The employees should not be targeted and the Tea Board has to be saved in the interest of Indian economy. I hope the hon. Minister will intervene in the matter immediately, come to the House and give a reply.

माननीय अध्यक्ष : श्री भैरों प्रसाद मिश्र को श्री सुदीप बंद्योपाध्याय द्वारा उठाए गए विÂषय के साथ संबद्ध करने की अनुमति प्रदान की जाती है।